

Revising for Parallelism I

The goal of writing is to communicate ideas, and sentence structure is the framework used to support those ideas. When you write a properly constructed sentence, chances are your readers won't even notice how it has been put together. Improperly constructed sentences, however, are awkward, and this awkwardness interferes with your reader's ability to give full attention to your message.

When you find an awkward sentence in your writing, check to see whether you need to revise for parallelism. In a sentence with **parallel construction**, the same grammatical form is used for a series of words, phrases, or clauses. For example, if a prepositional phrase is used for the first idea, prepositional phrases should be used for the related ideas that follow. If a gerund or a participle is used for the first, gerunds or participles should be used for the others.

Not parallel To write and **communicating** are not necessarily the same thing.

Parallel To write and to **communicate** are not necessarily the same thing.

Parallel Writing and **communicating** are not necessarily the same thing.

If an article (*a*, *an*, or *the*) or a preposition (such as *for*, *at*, or *in*) applies to all the items in the series, it should appear before only the first item or before every item.

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This rule should also be applied to pronouns, such as *who* and *that*, and to helping verbs, such as *am*, *is*, *have*, *had*, *can*, *could*, *will*, and *would*.

Not parallel I **had researched** the topic, **made** an outline, and **had written** a draft.

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EXERCISE Revise each sentence to make its structure parallel. If necessary, you may omit words, rearrange their order, or change their forms.

Sample The play I saw was clever, with romance, and it had lots of emotion.

Revision The play I saw was clever, romantic, and emotional.

1. There are many types of plays, including drama, tragedy, and comical.

2. Plays may be presented in theaters, open-air spaces, empty stores, or in school auditoriums.

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3. A play should be exciting, entertaining, and a meaningful experience for the audience.

4. Reading a script is easy, but to make a script into a production is challenging.

5. Even a play with only one act and having two characters requires much cooperative effort.

6. A director's work consists of analyzing the play, the casting of the roles, work with technicians, and supervision of the entire production.

7. Actors must understand their roles, determine their characters' feelings and motivations, and must decide how to move and speak.

8. Besides actors, the artists involved with a play include a scenic designer, lighting designer, and a costume designer.

9. The lighting designer arranges multicolored lights to illuminate a scene and supporting its mood.

10. When various productions of the same play are compared, one may notice vast differences in lighting, scenery, and in sound effects.

